

## January Proclaimed Kansas Radon Action Month

On Jan. 30, Governor Sebelius signed a proclamation declaring January to be Kansas Radon Action Month. Along with the Governor, KDHE is urging residents to take a stand to protect their families by testing their homes for an odorless, colorless, tasteless pollutant that can cause lung cancer. That pollutant, radon gas, is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that 21,000 lung cancer deaths each year are radon-related.

Radon is going undetected in homes across the country. It causes no immediate health symptoms, but long-term exposure can be deadly. EPA estimates that as many as one in 15 homes across the U.S. have elevated radon levels.



Helping Gov. Sebelius proclaim January Radon Action Month were representatives from KDHE and other partner agencies. (Left to right) Tom Conley, BAR; Ron Hammerschmidt, KDHE Division of Environment Director; Robert Dye, EPA Region 7; Cindy Evans, Shawnee County Extension Service (in front); Brian Hanson, Kansas State University; Gov. Sebelius; Bruce Snead, Kansas State University; Kim Steves, BAR; KDHE Sec. Roderick Bremby; Lesa Roberts, KDHE Center for Public Health Preparedness; and Clark Duffy, BAR.

Current radon testing data for Kansas shows that almost 40 percent (12,204) of the 31,084 radon test results in the KDHE database are above the EPA action level of 4.0 picocuries/liter. Elevated radon levels have been found in every county in Kansas. Simple test kits can reveal the amount of radon in any building. Those with high levels can be fixed with simple and affordable venting techniques. Testing is critical, because it is the only way to know if a building has significant concentrations of radon.

Radon test kits can be obtained by contacting your Kansas county extension office or calling the American Lung Association at (800) LUNG-USA. They are also available at many retail outlets. A list of certified testers and radon mitigation contractors is also available from the KDHE radon program in the Bureau of Air and Radiation, or by calling the Kansas Radon Hotline: 1-800-693-KDHE.

Additional information about radon including Kansas radon maps and data can be obtained from the Kansas Radon Program Web site at <http://radon.oznet.ksu.edu/>.